



ASSEMBLYMEMBER NICOLE PARRA

Representing the 30th Assembly District



Parra Notes

June 2, 2006

Hello Friends:

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHT

Well, this week proved a hectic one as I presented a number of my bills on the Assembly Floor, but before I get into legislative matters, I would like to touch on my highlight of the week.

Earlier in the week, I participated in a “**Salute to Small Business**” as part of **California Small Business Day**. **During** the event, I presented **Assembly Resolution 1907**, which recognizes the achievements of **Wildwood Packing and Cooling**, from **Kingsburg**.

Wildwood Packing and Cooling is a vibrant part of Kingsburg’s and California’s economy. The **Woods family** has set a great example for others thinking of venturing into the small business arena because they proved that it can be done. Small businesses often face fierce competition from larger competitors, but that should not be a deterrent to people from opening their own business.

Mark and Sue Woods started their first business as a trucking company in 1968, which involved transporting produce throughout **California**. **Wildwood Express, Inc.** has been working with their dealer, **Fresno Truck Center** of Fresno since 1971. With the help of their children, **Mark, Matthew, Luke, and Johna**, they expanded their business to include farming in 1978. The family entered into the packing and cooling industry in 2002, establishing **Wildwood Packing and Cooling** in 2004. In addition to the trucking business, which operates throughout California and Arizona, the company includes 13 farms with a total of 400 acres where they grow peaches, plums, nectarines and pluots (a plum/apricot hybrid). Additionally, they operate a packing house with 400,000 square feet of storage space. Wildwood Packing and Cooling operates year round and transports goods from across every region of the State to grocers both here and abroad.

I commend the **Woods family** for their successful business ventures and for serving as a shining example of entrepreneurial determination. They are a prominent and integral part of the **Kingsburg** community and I wish them continued success in their endeavors.

NOW, TO THE REST OF MY WEEK IN SACRAMENTO

During session this week, I secured the passage of **AB 2322**, which passed off the **Assembly Floor** by a vote of 51-5.

This bill makes a small, but substantive change to the current **Business and Professions Code**. It is good public policy that will prove a tangible benefit to California’s motorized vehicle enthusiasts.

AB 2322 enhances accountability regarding motorized vehicles sold in California by requiring the manufacturer, distributor, or dealer of motorized vehicles – such as the increasingly-popular motorized scooters we see many children riding – that are not already subject to registration or identification under the **Vehicle Code** to register with the **Department of Consumer Affairs**. The new registry, for which **AB 2322** calls, would provide purchasers

a valuable resource by allowing them to know whom to contact when seeking assistance or answers to questions regarding their motorized vehicle. At present, it is difficult – at best – for a purchaser of one of these relatively-inexpensive motorized vehicles to find whom to turn to when problems or questions arise.

AB 2322 is supported by the **California Motorcycle Dealers Association** and is on its way to the **Senate Rules Committee**.

Another one of my bills that made it through the **Assembly** this week is **AB 2333**, identity theft legislation, which moved from the **Assembly Floor** by a vote of 64-0.

We see so many instances of identity theft that shatter peoples' lives. This crime is a gross violation of personal privacy and we need to do all we can to prevent it from happening and we must ensure that those committing it are punished to the fullest extent of the law.

Under existing law, an individual who possesses another individual's identifying information with the intent to defraud can only be charged with a misdemeanor, regardless of how many individuals they could harm. **AB 2333** would make the possession of identifying information of 10 or more individuals, with the intent to defraud, an alternate misdemeanor-felony offense, punishable by imprisonment in a state prison for 16 months, 2 years, or 3 years, or by imprisonment in a county jail not to exceed one year, or by a fine not to exceed \$1,000, or by both imprisonment and fine.

Identity theft is a rapidly growing problem throughout the State of California. Nationwide, the **Federal Trade Commission** reported 43,839 victims of ID theft in 2004, with an average amount paid of \$1,455 in damages. Those numbers rank California 3rd in the nation in identity theft victims, on a per capita basis.

Oftentimes we talk about the problems facing society, but the time for talk is over when it comes to identity theft. We need to take a pro-active approach to combating this serious issue, and I feel this bill is another positive step in honing a very comprehensive identity theft policy.

AB 2333, which now moves to the **Senate Rules Committee**, is supported by the **California District Attorneys Association**, the **California Credit Union League**, the **California Narcotic Officers' Association**, and the **Coalition for Quality Credit Counseling**.

The next stop for **AB 2333** is the **Senate Rules Committee**.

Our **veterans** make so many sacrifices on this nation's behalf and many of them end up suffering from the long-term effects of combat. Given this reality, it is important for us to tailor our laws in a way that helps these veterans overcome their problems and deals with their unique situations in a compassionate and equitable way.

Under existing law, if a convicted defendant was a member of the military forces of the **United States** who served in combat in **Vietnam** and who suffers from substance abuse or psychological problems resulting from that service, the court may, under specified circumstances, order the defendant committed to the custody of federal correctional officials for incarceration for a term equivalent to that which the defendant would have served in state prison. **AB 2586** would instead provide that if a person is convicted of a criminal offense and alleges that he or she committed the offense as a result of **post-traumatic stress disorder**, substance abuse, or psychological problems stemming from service in combat in the **United States military**, the court shall hold a hearing prior to sentencing to make a determination about that allegation. If the court finds that the defendant's crime was committed as a result of one of those factors related to serving in combat, and the court places the person on probation, the bill would authorize the court to place the person into a treatment program, as specified.

AB 2586 is sponsored by the **Armed Forces Retirees Association of America** and co-sponsored by **Vietnam Veterans of America**. This bill is also supported by the **National Guard Association of California**, the **California Association of Veterans Service Officers**, the **California State Commanders Veterans Council**, the **California Society of Addiction Medicine**, the **Air Force Sergeant's Association**, the **Military Order of the Purple Heart**, the **Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America**, the **Marine Corps League**, and

the **Legion of Valor**.

AB 2586 passed from the **Assembly Floor** by a *vote of 66-0* and will next be taken up in the **Senate Rules Committee**.

Also this week, another one of my bills, **AB 2045**, received tremendous support as it passed from the **Assembly Floor** by a *vote of 57-0*.

Educating our children is a huge key to the future, but we cannot expect students to learn as much as they can or perform to the best of their abilities if school facilities are not up to par and conducive to the learning process. Each of this state's schools needs to be maintained at the very highest level, because we cannot afford to shortchange our kids on their future.

Under current law, the **State Allocation Board** provides funding to school districts for the construction and modernization of school facilities, and any funding appropriated is considered final. In other words, school districts cannot currently petition for additional monies if their costs are greater than expected. **AB 2045** would establish an exception that would authorize the **State Allocation Board** to approve a supplemental apportionment of up to 5% of the cost of a project in order to ensure that all minimum essential facilities, as defined, are included in the project. This bill allows the **State Allocation Board** to approve the supplemental apportionment if it determines that the apportionment would cover cost increases that are beyond the control of the school district. **AB 2045** also would require a school district to retain in the county fund any savings achieved by the efficient and prudent expenditure of specified school facilities funds, for expenditure by the district for other high priority capital outlay purposes.

AB 2045 is co-sponsored by the **Kern County Superintendent of Schools** and the **Small School Districts' Association**. This bill is also supported by the **California Association of School Business Officials**, the **Central Valley Education Coalition**, and the **Los Banos Unified School District**.

AB 2045 now moves to the **Senate Rules Committee**.

Another key bill that I presented on the **Assembly Floor** this week is **AB 2143**. This measure passed by a *vote of 44-22* and would change the designation of **Highway 43** to an inter-regional and inter-county route under state transportation codes.

The **Central Valley's needs** are traditionally overlooked and ignored, but passing a bill like this gives me hope that people are finally paying attention. This bill also serves as a great supplement to the \$1 billion for **Highway 99** in the bond package we recently passed. We are on track for a number of very comprehensive improvements to the Valley's air quality and transportation problems.

According to the **California Air Resources Board**, the **San Joaquin Valley** has the worst level of air quality in the state. With population quickly growing in the **Central Valley** this problem will only amplify as traffic congestion swells. Aside from the potential health risks that will arise, industries offering high-priority jobs whose employees value a clean environment may hesitate from relocating to the **Central Valley**.

Existing law requires that certain transportation funds be made available for transportation capital improvement projects to be programmed and expended in specified amounts for interregional and regional improvements, including state highway routes that are included in the interregional road system. **AB 2143** would include **State Highway Route 43**, which runs through the counties of **Kings, Kern, Fresno and Tulare**, as an eligible interregional and inter-county route. This would allow for highway improvements that would relieve traffic congestion and improve air quality in the Central Valley.

AB 2143 is sponsored by the **Kings County Association of Governments** and supported by the **Consulting Engineers & Land Surveyors of California (CELSOC)**. The Senate Rules Committee will next take up this bill.

Before I leave you this week, I would like to bring your attention to one more matter, regarding the **California**

Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley.

This week, a **Joint Budget Conference Committee** voted to cut **Governor Schwarzenegger's** proposed \$5 million for the **California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley**.

The Partnership is a tremendous asset in zeroing in on the problems facing the **Valley** and working toward solutions to fix these problems. It is unfortunate that the **Governor's** proposed funding was cut, but I will continue to work with my colleagues and the legislative leadership to ensure the **Partnership's** funding is reinstated. The Partnership is just too important of a resource to abandon.

Earlier this month, a Senate subcommittee cut the initially proposed \$5 million for the **Partnership**, in the **May Revision**, to \$1.25 million. However, at a recent hearing of the **Assembly Budget Subcommittee Number 4**, I joined **Assemblymen Juan Arambula** and **Michael Villines** in voting to reinstate the proposed funding.

I also co-signed a letter urging the committee to re-consider the decision to keep these critical monies from the **Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley**. Also signing the letter was **Assemblywoman Barbara Matthews**, and **Assemblymen Greg Aghazarian, Juan Arambula, Dave Cogdill, Bill Maze, Kevin McCarthy, and Michael Villines**.

*****HELPFUL STATE GOVERNMENT LINKS*****

I would like to encourage everyone to visit the California issue area web sites below. They are very informative and really interesting.

California Climate Change Portal

Sponsored by the California Climate Change Center to combine information on the impacts of climate change on California and the state's policies relating to global warming.

<http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/>

California Business Portal

This website provides a portal to a number of resources for starting, growing, financing, expanding or relocating a business in California.

<http://www.calbusiness.ca.gov/>

Governor Releases 2006 - 2007 State Budget

Visit the Department of Finance's E-Budget to view the Governor's New 2006 - 2007 California State Budget.

<http://www.ebudget.ca.gov/>

Where can I find information about entering my child into kindergarten?

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/fb/yr03compulsoryed.asp>

Become active in community service activities by visiting the web site for the California Service Corps

<http://www.csc.ca.gov/>

Gasoline and diesel prices have increased across the United States after Hurricane Katrina damaged the Gulf Coast petroleum infrastructure. Although California has adequate gasoline supplies, prices have climbed to over \$3.00 a gallon.

Take action and learn how you can save gasoline and money.

http://www.fypower.org/save_gasoline/

NEED HOMEWORK HELP?

The **California State Library** has made available through their website a new service called **Live Homework Help**. This service enables students to connect on-line with a tutor for assistance with homework questions. Supported by Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) federal funding, students can access Live Homework Help through [28 California public libraries](#). It is important to note that the tutors who respond to student questions

are screened, trained, and closely monitored.

Live Homework Help is easy! Log on to <http://www.library.ca.gov/tutor/> from your computer any time between 1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and follow the simple setup instructions.

MEETING REQUESTS

If you or your organization would like to set up a time to meet with me or would like for me to attend an event you are sponsoring, please feel free to contact my **Executive Secretary Ellen Manolis** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at Ellen.Manolis@asm.ca.gov.

INTERNS WANTED

I am accepting applications for the internship program in my **Hanford, Bakersfield** and **Sacramento** offices. Candidates should be residents of the **30th Assembly District**, possess solid research and communication skills, and have a strong interest in public policy and political issues facing the **Central Valley**. Applications can be found by going to: <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a30>.

For Hanford office internships contact **Richard Valle** at (559) 585-7170 or by e-mail at Richard.Valle@asm.ca.gov.

For Bakersfield office internships contact **Paula DeLaRiva** at (661) 334-3745 or by e-mail at Paula.DeLaRiva@asm.ca.gov.

For Sacramento office internships contact **Brandon Sanders** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at Brandon.Sanders@asm.ca.gov.

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1774: The Quartering Act, which required American colonists to allow British soldiers into their houses, was reenacted.

1851: Maine became the first U.S. state to enact a law prohibiting alcohol.

1883: The first baseball game under electric lights was played in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

1886: Grover Cleveland became the first U.S. president to get married while in office.

1924: All American Indians were granted U.S. citizenship by the U.S. Congress.

1946: Italians voted by referendum to form a republic instead of a monarchy.

1954: U.S. Senator Joseph McCarthy charged that there were communists working in the CIA and atomic weapons plants.

1997: Timothy McVeigh was found guilty of the bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma City in which 168 people were killed.

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